



Luke A. Bronin
Mayor

Thank you Sen. Gomes, Rep. Tercyak, and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee for the opportunity to offer testimony in support of **H.B. 5237: "An Act Concerning Fair Chance Employment"**.

If enacted, this bill would complement the Second Chance Society legislation enacted last year by removing an unnecessary obstacle to employment for individuals with criminal records.

While the bill would not prohibit private employers from conducting a background check or taking an applicant's criminal history into account when making hiring decisions, the bill would remove questions regarding an applicant's criminal history from the initial job application. As a result, individuals seeking a second chance will be less likely to be discouraged from submitting a job application, and employers will be more likely to assess a candidate based on his or her full qualifications.

This bill recognizes that past mistakes, particularly those mistakes made during youth, should not be a permanent barrier to employment. This bill would strengthen Hartford's efforts to reduce crime by promoting second chances for individuals with criminal records.

The intent of this bill is simple: when an employee is otherwise qualified, a past mistake – unrelated to the nature of the job the individual is seeking – should not represent an insurmountable barrier to opportunity and employment. Several states have already adopted this common sense approach to employment decisions, including Massachusetts, New York, and Rhode Island.

I urge the committee's favorable action on this bill.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Luke Bronin", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Luke Bronin
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